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ABSTRACT

The Conflict Tactics Scale questionnaire on marital violence was administered to 29 alcoholics and their wives at entry to, and 1 year after, completing a behavioral marital therapy (BMT) treatment program. In the year prior to BMT, prevalence rates of any violent act, of minor to moderate violent acts, and of severe violent acts were five to six times greater than 1985 national sample rates for both alcoholics and their wives. In the year after BMT, when the alcoholics' drinking and the couples' level of marital adjustment had improved significantly, husband-to-wife overall and moderate violence, although decreased significantly in prevalence and frequency, remained significantly elevated relative to national norms. Husbands' severe violence, however, did not decrease significantly and the prevalence rate, although reduced by one-half, was still significantly elevated relative to national norms. Wife-to-husband violence after BMT was significantly decreased in prevalence or frequency and no longer significantly elevated relative to national norms for indices of overall, moderate, and severe violence, except for the specific act of threatening with a knife or gun, the prevalence of which did not change after BMT, but remained significantly higher than national norms. (Author/NB)

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Marital Violence in the Year Before and After Spouse-Involved Alcoholism Treatment

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Marital Violence in the Year Before and After Spouse-Involved Alcoholism Treatment

ABSTRACT

The Conflict Tactics Scale questionnaire on marital violence was collected from 29 alcoholics and their wives at entry to and one year after completing a behavioral marital therapy (BMT) treatment program. In the year prior to BMT, both the alcoholics and their wives had a significantly higher prevalence of violence than reported by a 1985 U.S. national sample. Prevalence rates of any violent act, of minor to moderate violent acts (threw something at spouse; pushed, grabbed, shoved; slapped), and of severe violent acts (kicked, bit, hit; hit with something; beat up the other one; threatened with knife or gun) were five to six times greater than the national sample rates. When the prevalence of violence over the life of the relationship was considered, results showed that over 85% of the alcoholic couples had experienced violence at least once in their relationship and that over 40% had experienced severe violence. In the year after BMT, when the alcoholics' drinking and the couples' level of marital adjustment had improved significantly, husband-to-wife overall and moderate violence, although decreased significantly in prevalence and frequency, remained significantly elevated relative to national norms being still over twice as prevalent among the alcoholic than the national sample. Husbands' severe violence, however, did not decrease significantly and the prevalence rate, although reduced by half, was still significantly elevated relative to national norms. Wife-to-husband violence after BMT was significantly decreased in prevalence or frequency and no longer significantly elevated relative to national norms for

indices of overall, moderate, and severe violence. The only exception to this general reduction in wives' violence was for the specific violent act of threatening with a knife or gun the prevalence of which did not change after BMT and remained significantly higher than national norms. Thus, prior to seeking treatment for the husbands' alcoholism and their conflicted marriages, both alcoholics and their wives engaged in high levels of violence which, although reduced after BMT, remained elevated compared to national norms across a range of violent behaviors for the husbands but not for the wives. Caution should be exercised in interpreting the present results based as they are on a small, select, clinical sample of alcoholics not matched on demographic and other characteristics with the national comparison sample.

Marital Violence in the Year Before and After Spouse-Involved Alcoholism Treatment

Marital and family violence is a significant problem in the U.S. (Straus & Gelles, 1986). Although excessive alcohol use is associated with and alcoholics' families are at greater risk for such violence (Leonard & Jacob, 1988), marital violence data based on adequate measurement methods are not available on clinical populations of alcoholics.

Virtually nothing is known about what happens to the levels of marital violence in alcoholics' families after the alcoholic receives treatment. Other aspects of marital, family and psychosocial functioning improve to the level of matched community controls when the alcoholic's drinking improves (Cronkite, Finney, Nekish, & Moos, 1990), so perhaps marital violence also improves during recovery. On the other hand, once marital violence is established and becomes part of a pattern of family dysfunction it may continue even when the alcoholic recovers.

We have been studying behavioral marital therapy (BMT), one of the most promising current alcoholism treatment methods (O'Farrell, 1988). BMT produces clinically and statistically significant improvements in the alcoholics' drinking and in the marital relationship (O'Farrell, Cutter, Choquette, Brown, McCourt & Worobec, 1990; O'Farrell, Cutter & Floyd, 1985), but the effects of BMT on marital violence are unknown.

The present study analyzed questionnaire data on marital violence among male alcoholics and their wives in the year before and the year after an out-patient behavioral marital therapy (BMT) couples group treatment program for alcoholism. The objectives of the present study were to:

(1) Describe the extent of marital violence reported by alcoholics and their wives in the year before and the year after BMT in comparison with levels of marital violence reported by a representative sample of the U.S. population.

(2) Determine whether marital violence decreases significantly in the year after as compared to the year before BMT.

METHOD

Subjects and Procedures.

Twenty-nine couples with a newly abstinent alcoholic husband, who were treated in the Counseling for Alcoholics' Marriages (CALM) Project at the VA Medical Center in Brockton and West Roxbury, Massachusetts were studied. Inclusion criteria were: (a) age 25 to 60; (b) married at least 1 year or living together in a stable common-law relationship for at least 3 years; (c) husband met DSM-III-R criteria for alcohol abuse or alcohol dependence; (d) Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test (MAST; Selzer, 1971) score $\geq$ 7; (e) alcoholic had consumed alcohol in the 120 days prior to initial assessment; (f) alcoholic accepted abstinence at least for the duration of the BMT couples group. Exclusion criteria were: (a) wife also abused alcohol and had been abstinent less than six months; (b) either spouse met DSM-III criteria for psychoactive substance use disorder (other than alcoholism) in past six months; (c) either spouse met DSM-III criteria for the following disorders -- schizophrenia, delusional (paranoid) disorder, bipolar disorder, major depression, other psychotic disorders or borderline personality disorder; and (d) couple separated and unwilling to reconcile for the project.

Insert Table 1 about here

Table 1 presents demographic, drinking history, and marital characteristics of the sample. On average, subjects were in their early forties, high school educated, married over 10 years with children. The husbands' alcoholism was evident from their elevated scores on the Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test and the Alcohol Dependence Scale and multiple prior hospitalizations and arrests. Scores on the Marital Adjustment Test showed significant relationship distress.

All subjects were treated in a BMT couples group which consisted of an Antabuse Contract to promote sobriety, instigation of positive couple and family activities, and communication skills training (O'Farrell & Cutter, 1984; O'Farrell, in press). Marital and drinking adjustment measures were collected before and after the BMT group and at quarterly intervals after the end of the BMT group. A questionnaire on the extent of marital aggression and violence for the previous 12 months was collected before and at one year after the BMT group.

Measures

Marital Violence Measure. Marital violence was measured with the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), the most widely used, state-of-the-art measure for this purpose. The CTS, as described by Straus (1979), has three subscales; Reasoning (3 items), Verbal Aggression (6 items), and Violence (8 items). The violence items are further divided into (a) minor to moderate violence and (b) severe violence indices of the CTS. Respondents rate each item on a 7-point scale (0 = never, 1 = once, 2 = twice, 3 = 3-5 times, 4 = 6-10 times, 5 = 11-20 times, 6 = over 20 times) for the frequency that they and their spouse did the behavior in the past 12 months. In addition, respondents rate each item for whether or not either spouse ever did the behavior at any time in the past during the couple's relationship.

National surveys of family violence rates in 1975 and 1985 provided CTS data for U.S. nationally representative samples (Straus, 1979; Straus & Gelles, 1986). These national survey data were used for comparison with the marital violence data from alcoholics and their wives in the present study. In order to provide data in a form comparable to these national surveys and to deal with concerns about the under-reporting of physical aggression, three prevalence measures of violence were used: (a) self-report in which the alcoholic and the wife indicated if they had engaged in aggression against their partner in the past year; (b) combined self and spouse report which was formed by assessing whether either the husband or the wife reported any husband-to-wife or any wife-to-husband violence; and (c) couple scores which reflected the extent of violence that occurred within that couple as indicated by both partners in the relationship about themselves and their spouses. Prevalence scores were derived both for the prior year and for any time in the past during the couple's relationship. Finally, measures of frequency of violence (0 = never to 6 = over 20 times) in the past year were constructed based on self-report and on combined self and spouse reports which used the higher of the two spouses' reports for husband-to-wife and wife-to-husband violence.

Other Measures. Severity of the alcoholism problem at study entry was measured by: (a) total score on the Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test (MAST) (Selzer, 1971) which measures recognition and negative consequences of and help-seeking for alcohol problems; (b) total score on the Alcohol Dependence Scale (Skinner & Allen, 1982), which provides a continuous measure of the extent and severity of the alcoholics' physical and psychological dependence on alcohol; and lifetime total number of alcohol-related hospitalizations and arrests. Severity of the marital problems was assessed by study entry scores on the Marital Adjustment Test (Locke &

Wallace, 1959), a widely used measure of overall marital satisfaction with established reliability and validity.

RESULTS

Prevalence of Marital Violence in the Year Before and the Year After BMT.

The prevalence of violence in the present sample of alcoholics and their wives was compared with rates from the 1985 U.S. national sample. Prevalence of violence was the percentage of respondents reporting an occurrence of each violent act, any violent act, any minor to moderate violent act, and any severe violent act, within the given time frame. Prevalence of the above measures of violence were available for the year before and after BMT. Self-reports, self and spouse reports and couples scores were analyzed with Chi-square to determine if the alcoholics differed from the national sample.

Insert Table 2 about here

Self-reported prevalence rates. The comparisons of self-reported violence for the alcoholics and their wives with the 1985 U.S. national sample are summarized in Table 2. At pretest in the year before BMT self-reported violence was three to five times more prevalent for alcoholics and for their wives than it was in the U.S. national sample for the occurrence of any violent act and for minor to moderate violent acts (threw something at spouse; pushed, grabbed, shoved; slapped). However, the prevalence of severe violence acts (kicked, bit or hit; hit with something; threatened with knife or gun) was greater than the national sample only for the alcoholics' wives but not for the alcoholics them-

selves. Notably, the alcoholics' wives reported over 11 times greater prevalence of threatening with a knife or gun than did women in the national sample. At post-test, one year after BMT, the overall prevalence of husband to wife violence was still greater among the alcoholics being still over double that in the national sample. However, overall prevalence of wife to husband violence was not any longer greater than national norms. Further, when each violent act was examined separately, none of them was any longer significantly greater than the national sample among either the alcoholics or their wives.

Insert Table 3 about here

Prevalence rates based on combined self and spouse reports. When the above Chi squares were repeated with the combined self and spouse reports, the pattern of results (as shown in Table 3) remained essentially the same as for self-reports. The prevalence rates at pre-test were somewhat higher than for self-reports, however, resulting in significantly higher prevalence of overall violence, minor to moderate violent acts, and severe violence for both husbands and wives among the alcoholics than in the national sample. At post-test, the prevalence of overall violence, of specific moderate violent acts, and of severe violence by the alcoholics still exceeded the comparison sample. Wives' threatening with a knife or gun was the only aspect of the wives' aggression that remained elevated in comparison with the national norms.

Insert Table 4 about here

Couple-based prevalence. A third index of prevalence was computed to indicate the extent of violence within the couple, regardless of whether the husband or wife was the aggressor. If either a self report or a spouse's report of aggression was affirmative for an item, the couple score was also designated affirmative. The couple scores are presented in Table 4. Only summary scores for overall and severe violence were available for comparison in the national sample. The couples with an alcoholic husband reported approximately five times higher prevalence than the national sample for overall and for severe violence in the year before BMT. Overall but not severe violence was still more prevalent in the year after BMT.

Finally, the couple scores of the year before BMT were compared with the couple scores reported for "any time in the past" (Table 5) using McNemar's test for the significance of change. The prevalence rates for the year prior to starting BMT did not differ significantly from the prevalence rates over the life of the relationship. Nonetheless, examining the prevalence of violence ever in the relationship indicates that over 85% of the alcoholic couples had experienced violence at least once in their relationship and that over 40% had experienced severe violence.

Insert Table 5 about here

Extent of Change in Marital Violence from the Year Before to the Year After BMT

Prevalence of violence (assessed by both self-report and combined self-and-spouse-reports) for the year before BMT was compared with the year after BMT using McNemar's test of change. Prevalence of both husband-to-wife and wife-to-husband was compared before and after BMT on each individual item and on summary scores of moderate, severe and overall violence. Footnotes to Tables 2 and 3 summarize significant results of these analyses. Results from both self-and combined reports on husband-to-wife violence showed significant decreases in the percentage of couples who experienced "pushing, grabbing, or shoving", any violent act, and any moderate violent act by the husband in the year after BMT. Wife-to-husband violence from the combined reports (Table 3) showed significant decreases in the percentage of couples who experienced "pushing, grabbing, or shoving", "slapping", any violent act, and any moderate violent act by the wife in the year after BMT. Wives' self-reported violence did not decrease significantly on any of the items or indices. The decrease in the combined report data is due largely to much higher pretest scores for wives' violence in the combined than in the self-reported data (see columns two and four of Tables 2 and 3).

The extent of change in frequency of violence from before to after BMT was examined with correlated *t*-tests on the quantitative measures of frequency of violence (0 = never to 6 = more than 20 times per year) using both self and combined self and spouse reports for each CTS item and index. Footnotes to Tables 2 and 3 summarize the results of these analyses. Results on the individual items concerning husband-to-wife violence

indicated less frequent pushing and shoving [self-reports, t (26) = 2.76, p = .01; combined reports, t (25) = 2.91, p = .007], slapping [self-reports, t (26) = 1.99, p = .057; combined reports, t (25) = 2.29, p = .031], and a trend toward decreased hitting [combined reports, t (25) = 2.00, p = .057] by alcoholics after BMT. Summary scores also showed a lower frequency of moderate violence [self-reports, t (26) = 2.93, p = .007; combined reports, t (25) = 3.04, p = .005] and of overall violence [self-reports, t (26) = 2.83, p = .009; combined reports, t (25) = 3.24, p = .003] by alcoholics after BMT. Results from the combined report data on wife-to-husband violence showed less frequent slapping [t (25) = 2.18, p = .039], less frequent severe violence [t (25) = 2.47, p = .021], and a trend toward less pushing and shoving [t (25) = 1.99, p = .058] by wives of alcoholics in the year after BMT. Wives' self-reported frequency of violence did not decrease significantly on any of the CTS items or indices.

DISCUSSION

In the year prior to starting BMT alcoholism treatment, the alcoholics and their wives of the present study had a significantly higher prevalence of violence than the 1985 national sample which served as a comparison group. In summarizing the present results, prevalence rates based on combined self and spouse reports (Straus & Galles, 1990) were used to deal with concerns about possible under-reporting of physical aggression. Prevalence rates were derived for the occurrence of (a) minor to moderate violent acts (threw something at the spouse; pushed, grabbed, shoved; slapped), (b) severe violent acts (kicked, bit, hit; hit with something; beat up; threatened with knife or gun; used knife or gun), and (c) any violent act

independent of severity level. The present results showed elevated rates five to six times greater than the national sample for any violent act and for moderate, and severe violence by both alcoholics and their wives. Severe violence appeared to be more common by the wives than by the husbands, perhaps to compensate for the husbands' strength. Finally, when the prevalence of violence over the life of the relationship was considered, results showed that over 85% of the alcoholic couples had experienced violence at least once in their relationship and that over 40% had experienced severe violence.

In the year following BMT treatment, the prevalence of violence by the alcoholics toward their wives, although considerably lower on most specific violent acts, remained higher than the national norms for any violent act, and for moderate and severe violent acts. Wife-to-husband violence was no longer elevated relative to national norms in the year after BMT with the exception of the specific severe violent act of threatening with a knife or gun.

Significant decreases in certain aspects of marital violence were noted in the year following BMT as compared with the year before BMT. For husband to wife violence, the percent of couples who experienced any violent act and any moderate violent act decreased after BMT. The percent of couples who experienced any severe violent act by the husband, although reduced by half, did not decrease significantly after BMT. Similarly when the frequency of occurrence of husband to wife violence was examined, significant decreases after BMT occurred in the frequency of violence overall and of moderate violent acts but not in the frequency of severe violence. For wife to husband violence, the percent of couples who

experienced any violent act and any moderate violent act decreased after BMT, while the reductions in severe violence, although considerable, were not statistically significant. On the other hand, a significant decrease in the frequency of severe violence by wives was noted after BMT while the frequency of wives' overall and moderate violence did not decrease significantly.

To summarize, the percentage of couples with an alcoholic husband who experienced any violent act, any moderate violent act and any severe violent act in the year before BMT alcoholism treatment was five to six times greater and significantly higher than a U. S. national sample. These results applied to violence by <u>both</u> alcoholics and their wives. In the year after BMT, when the alcoholics' drinking and the couples' level of marital adjustment had improved significantly (O'Farrell et al, 1990), husband-to-wife overall and moderate violence, although decreased significantly in prevalence and frequency, remained significantly elevated relative to national norms being still over twice as prevalent among the alcoholic than the national sample. Husbands' severe violence, however, did not decrease significantly and the prevalence rate, although reduced by half, was still significantly elevated relative to national norms. Wife-to-husband violence after BMT was significantly decreased in prevalence or frequency and no longer significantly elevated relative to national norms for indices of overall, moderate, and severe violence. The only exception to this general reduction in wives' violence was for the specific violent act of threatening with a knife or gun, the prevalence of which did not change after BMT and remained significantly higher than national norms. Thus, prior to seeking treatment for the husbands alco-

holism and the: conflicted marriages, both alcoholics and their wives engaged in high levels of violence which, although reduced after BMT, remained elevated compared to national norms across a range of violent behaviors for the husbands but not for the wives.

A number of important limitations should be noted in considering the results of this preliminary study which represents our initial examination of data on marital violence gathered in our BMT program for alcoholics. First, results based on the present small select sample may not be the same as we will find on the larger sample of clients we are gathering currently and most likely would not generalize to married alcoholics who do not seek spouse-involved alcoholism treatment. Second, the alcoholic and comparisons samples were not matched on demographics and data for the two samples were based on somewhat different methods of data collection. The national sample study interviewed both men and women but had one respondent per couple who reported on their own and on their spouse's violence. In the alcoholic sample, the husband and wife in each couple provided data about their own and their partner's behavior. Third, the present study did not use age-specific national norms which were only recently published (Straus & Gelles, 1990). If we had used the appropriate norms for couples over age 25, the differences between the alcoholic and national samples would have been even greater. Finally, the present study did not relate the extent of marital violence to levels of the alcoholics' drinking and the couples' marital conflict. Such analyses are planned as soon as ongoing data collection produces a larger sample sufficient for such analyses.

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Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations and Ranges for Demographic, Drinking History, and Marital Characteristics of Alcoholics and Wives at Entry to BMT Treatment Program.

Characteristics	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Husbands' Age	43.90	8.16	28-56
Wives' Age	40.93	9.07	27-63
Husbands' Years of Education	12.14	1.51	9-16
Wives' Years of Education	12.93	1.58	8-16
Years Married	13.34	8.40	1-28
Number of Children	2.77	2.20	0-11
Years Drinking a Problem	14.72	11.08	2-41
Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test	38.21	11.56	11-53
Alcohol Dependence Scale	22.34	11.38	2-44
Marital Adjustment Test	88.84	25.98	18-136
Previous Alcohol-Related Hospitalizations	8.34	12.61	0-53
Prior alcohol-related arrests	3.17	4.78	0-24

Table 2. Prevalence of Self-Reported Violent Acts for Male Alcoholics and their Wives in the Year Before and the Year After BMT and for a 1985 U.S. National Sample.

	Alcoholics and their Wives					
	Before BMT		After BMT		1985 U.S. National Sample	
Variable	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %
Minor to Moderate Violence Acts						
1. Threw something at the other one	13.8**	10.3	3.7	3.8	2.8	4.3
2. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved the other one	37.9***	31.0***	18.5[a,b]	19.2	9.3	8.9
3. Slapped the other one	13.8**	13.8*	3.7	3.8	2.9	4.1
Severe Violence Acts						
4. Kicked, bit, or hit the other one	3.4	10.3*	0.0	3.8	1.5	2.4
5. Hit, or tried to hit, with something	3.4	10.3*	0.0	3.8	1.7	3.0
6. Beat up the other one	0.0	3.4	0.0	3.8	0.8	0.4
7. Threatened with a knife or gun	0.0	6.9*	0.0	3.8	0.4	0.6
8. Used a knife or gun	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.8	0.2	0.2
Indices from above Items						
Overall Violence (1-8)	37.9***	47.9***	28.5**[a,b]	19.2*	11.3	12.1
Severe Violence (4-8)	3.4	17.2**	0.0	3.8	3.0	4.4
Moderate Violence (1-3)	37.9	44.5	28.5[a,b]	19.2	----	----

Note. Values given for each of the eight items are the percentage of respondents reporting that they themselves did the specific violent act in the prior year. The prevalence rate for each of the three indices is the percentage of respondents reporting an occurrence for at least one of the items in the index. Chi-square two tailed tests assessed differences between the alcoholic and the national sample data, which are taken from Straus and Gelles (1986), p. 471.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

[a]The percentage of couples who experienced this type of violence significantly decreased in the year after as compared to the year before BMT using McNemar's test of change.

[b]The frequency (scored 0 = never to 6 = more than 20 times per year) of this type of violence significantly decreased in the year after as compared to the year before BMT using a correlated t-test.

Table 3. Prevalence of Violent Acts Based on Combined Self and Spouse Reports for Male Alcoholics and their Wives in the Year Before and the Year After BMT and for a 1985 U.S. National Sample.

Variable	Alcoholics and their Wives				1985 U.S. National Sample	
	Before BMT		After BMT			
	Husband to Wife %	Wife to Husband %	Husband to Wife %	Wife to Husband %	Men %	Women %
Minor to Moderate Violence Acts						
1. Threw something at the other one	13.8*	20.7**	17.2**	6.9	2.8	4.3
2. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved the other one	55.2***	58.6***	24.1*[a,b]	20.7[a]	9.3	8.9
3. Slapped the other one	17.2**	27.6***	3.4[b]	6.9[a,b]	2.9	4.1
Severe Violence Acts						
4. Kicked, bit, or hit the other one	13.8*	20.7***	3.4	6.9	1.5	2.4
5. Hit, or tried to hit with something	10.3	20.7***	3.4	6.9	1.7	3.0
6. Beat up the other one	3.4	3.4	0	3.4	0.8	0.4
7. Threatened with a knife or gun	0	6.9*	0	6.9*	0.4	0.6
8. Used a knife or gun	0	0	0	3.4	0.2	0.2
Indices from above Items						
Overall Violence (1-8)	55.2***	58.6***	24.1*[a,b]	20.7[a]	11.3	12.1
Severe Violence (4-8)	13.8**	27.6***	6.9**	6.9[b]	3.0	4.4
Moderate Violence (1-3)	55.2	58.6	24.1[a,b]	20.7[a]	----	----

Table 3. (continued)

Note. Values given for each of the eight items are the percentage of couples in which either spouse reported that the specific violent act occurred in the prior year. The prevalence rate for each of the three indices is the percentage of couples reporting an occurrence for at least one of the items in the index. Chi-square two-tailed tests assessed differences between the alcoholic and national sample data, which are taken from Straus and Gelles (1986), p. 471.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

[a]The percentage of couples who experienced this type of violence significantly decreased in the year after as compared to the year before BMT using McNemar's test of change.

[b]The frequency (scored 0 = never to 6 = more than 20 times per year) of this type of violence significantly decreased in the year after as compared to the year before BMT using a correlated t-test.

Table 4. Prevalence of Violent Acts Reported by Each Couple in the Year Before and the Year After BMT and for a 1985 U.S. National Sample

	Alcoholics and their Wives		
	Before BMT	After BMT	1985 U.S. National Sample[b]
Variable	%	%	%
Minor to Moderate Violence Acts			
1. Threw something at the other one	27.6	24.1	
2. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved the other one	72.4	31.0	
3. Slapped the other one	31.0	10.3	
Severe Violence Acts			
4. Kicked, bit, or hit the other one	24.1	10.3	
5. Hit, or tried to hit, with something	20.7	10.3	
6. Beat up the other one	6.9	3.4	
7. Threatened with a knife or gun	6.9	6.9	
8. Used a knife or gun	0	3.4	
Indices from above Items[a]			
Overall Violence (1-8)	72.4***	31.0*	15.8
Severe Violence (4-8)	31.0***	13.8	5.8
Moderate Violence (1-3)	72.4	31.0	

[a]The prevalence rate presented is the percentage of couples reporting an occurrence by either spouse for at least one of the items in the prior year. Information regarding the individual items and the index for moderate violence was not available for the national sample. Chi-square two-tailed tests assessed differences between the alcoholic and national samples.

[b]Straus and Gelles (1986), p. 470.

*p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 5.

Prevalence of Violent Acts by Either Spouse Reported by Male Alcoholics or their Wives Ever and in the Year Before BMT.

	Ever			Year Before BMT
	Either by Husband's report	Either by wife's report	Couple	Couple
Minor to Moderate Violence Acts				
1. Threw something	31.0%	27.6%	41.4%	27.6%
2. Pushed, grabbed, shoved	48.3%	62.1%	82.8%	72.4%
3. Slapped the other one	27.6%	28.6%	41.4%	31.0%
Severe Violence Acts				
4. Kicked, bit, hit	24.1%	28.6%	31.0%	24.1%
5. Hit with something	17.2%	17.9%	24.1%	20.7%
6. Beat up the other	10.3%	7.1%	13.8%	6.9%
7. Threatened w/knife or gun	0.0	10.7%	10.3%	6.9%
8. Used knife or gun	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Indices from above items				
Overall Violence	58.6%	75.0%	86.2%	72.4%
Severe Violence	37.6%	39.3%	41.4%	31.0%
Moderate Violence	58.6%	37.9%	86.2%	72.4%